

Message Text

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46

ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5297

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 2822

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SP

SUBJECT: COMMENTS ON INTERNAL SITUATION

1. DIRECTOR OF PRIME MINISTER'S CABINET (OYARZABAL) TOLD AMBASSADOR APRIL 11 THAT PRIME MINISTER HAD BEEN CONVINCED THAT THE TIME HAD COME FOR HIM TO MAKE A NATION WIDE TV ADDRESS TO SET FORTH WHAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD ACCOMPLISHED SO FAR AND TO GIVE A CALENDAR FOR FUTURE ACTIONS. THE PRIME MINISTER BY NATURE IS NOT A LEADER, BUT HE SEEMS NOW TO BE CONVINCED THAT HE SHOULD WORRY LESS ABOUT THE EXTREME RIGHT AND GIVE POSITIVE DIRECTION TO THE COUNTRY. OYARZABAL COMMENTED THAT PRIME MINISTER IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY IRRITATED BY RIGHT WINGERS WHO OCCUPY GOVERNMENT POSITIONS AND WHO ENGAGE IN THINLY VEILED MEETINGS TO CRITICIZE THE GOVERNMENT'S ACTIVITIES. SOME OF THESE PERSONS HAVE BEEN CALLED TO ACTIVITIES. SOME OF THESE PERSONS HAVE BEEN CALLED TO ACCOUNT BY THE MINISTER OF THE PRESIDENCY.

2. OYARZABAL SAID THAT IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO ADVANCE THE REFERENDUM TO EARLIER THAN SEPTEMBER OCTOBER PERIOD BECAUSE PROBLEMS ARE BEING ENCOUNTERED IN CARRYING OUT THE CENSUS, THE FIRST ONE SINCE 1966. (FRAGA HAD ALSO MENTIONED THIS PROBLEM IN SPEAKING WITH THE AMBASSADOR LAST WEEK.) IN ADDITION TO THE CENSUS, IT IS NECESSARY TO COMPLETE WORK ON THOSE MATTERS WHICH ARE TO BE PRESENTED TO THE REFERENDUM. THE SUCCESSION QUESTION
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IS READY, BUT THE REFORM OF THE CORTES WILL

TAKE ANOTHER THREE WEEKS OF WORK WITHIN THE MIXED COMMISSION BEFORE IT CAN BE PRESENTED TO THE GOVERNMENT. THERE IS ALSO THE UNDECIDED QUESTION OF WHETHER SYNDICAL REFORM SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE REFEREDUM. SOME ELEMENTS IN THE GOVERNMENT BELIEVE IT SHOULD WHILE OTHERS FEEL THAT REFORM SEPARATING MANAGEMENT AND LABOR AND PROVIDING FOR TRADE UNION PLURALISM, BUT WITHIN A UNITARY STRUCTURE, SHOULD BE DEALT WITH AT THE SSO CONGRESS TO BE HELD IN EITHER JUNE OR EARLY JULY.

3. OYARZABAL SAID THAT IT WAS NOW AGREED THAT IN THE CORTES REFORM, THE LOWER HOUSE SHOULD BE ELECTED ENTIRELY BY UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE WITH TWO MEMBERS FOR EACH PROVINCE PLUS A MEMBER FOR EACH 100,000 INHABITANTS. UNDER THIS ARRANGEMENT, BARCELONA WOULD HAVE THE LARGEST NUMBER OF MEMBERS, WITH MADRID SECOND. THE UPPER HOUSE WOULD REMAIN CORPORATE WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF MUNICIPALITIES, UNIVERSITIES AND PROFESSIONAL GROUPS. WHETHER THERE WOULD BE SYNDICAL REPRESENTATION WOULD DEPEND ON THE OUTCOME OF SYNDICAL REFORM, WITH A CERTAIN TENDENCY WITHIN THE AGAINST REPRESENTATION IN THE CORTES.

4. OYARZABAL CONFIRMED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN PARTICULARLY ANNOYED BY THE ACTIONS OF THE PSOE AND SOME OF THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS IN JOINING WITH THE JUNTA DEMOCRATICA. THEY HAD GIVEN ASSURANCES THAT THEY DID NOT DESIRE TO MAKE COMMON CAUSE WITH THE COMMUNISTS AND THE SUDDEN ABOUT FACE IS CREATING DIFFICULTIES FOR THE GOVERNMENT. AT THE SAME TIME, OYARZABAL SAID THAT IT WAS BY NO MEANS CERTAIN THAT THE PLATA JUNTA WOULD REALLY GET OFF THE GROUND, BEARING IN MIND SOME OF THE CONDITIONS THAT HAD BEEN PLACED BY SOME OF THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS ON ITS ULTIMATE ESTABLISHMENT.

5. ASKED REGARDING POSSIBLE FRICTION BETWEEN FRAGA AND AREILZA, OYARZABAL PLAYED IT DOWN, ALTHOUGH HE ADMITTED THAT BOTH MEN HAD PRIME MINISTERIAL AMBITIONS. HE ALSO SAID THAT SOME OF THE ARRESTS HAD CAUSED AREILZA DIFFICULTIES WITH RESPECT TO EUROPEANS AND, IN FACT FRG FOREIGN MINISTER GENSHER HAD TELEPHONED TO EXPRESS CONCERN

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AT THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS IN SEVILLE APRIL 2. FRAGA HAD INSISTED THAT HE NEEDED A FREE HAND IN APRIL AND IN MAY TO DEAL WITH EXPECTED DEMONSTRATIONS, SINCE IT WAS ESSENTIAL THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOW ITS AUTHORITY AND NOT PERMIT THE "STREET" TO GET CONTROL.

6. DURING THE CONVERSATION THE AMBASSADOR EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE GOVERNMENT REGAINING THE INITIATIVE

TO MOVE FORWARD WITHIN A PRECISE TIME FRAME WITH ITS REFORM PROGRAM. AT PRESENT, IT APPEARED THAT THE INITIATIVE WAS ON THE RIGHT AND ON THE LEFT, WITH THE GOVERNMENT APPEARING TO BOG DOWN IN OBTAINING ACTION BY THE CORTES FOR REFORM MEASURES.

8. OYARZABAL GAVE THIS INFORMATION TO AMBASSADOR IN CONFIDENTIAL IN THE EXPECTATION THAT IT WOULD REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL. STABLER

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